



**REPORT TO:** Planning Portfolio Holder

11 December 2017

**LEAD OFFICER:** Joint Director for Planning and Economic Development

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## **Neighbourhood Plans: Bassingbourn-cum-Kneesworth Neighbourhood Area designation**

### **Purpose**

1. To make a decision on the application (see Appendix A) to designate the parish of Bassingbourn-cum-Kneesworth as a Neighbourhood Area.
2. This is not a key decision. The Planning Portfolio Holder has delegated authority to make decisions on Neighbourhood Area designations.

### **Recommendation**

3. It is recommended that the Planning Portfolio Holder approves the designation of a Neighbourhood Area for the parish of Bassingbourn-cum-Kneesworth as proposed by Bassingbourn-cum-Kneesworth Parish Council (see Appendix A).

### **Reasons for Recommendation**

4. South Cambridgeshire District Council (SCDC) has received an application from Bassingbourn-cum-Kneesworth Parish Council to designate the parish of Bassingbourn-cum-Kneesworth as a Neighbourhood Area. The Parish Council has applied to have the whole of its parish as a Neighbourhood Area. The regulations relating to such applications state that SCDC must designate the area provided that the application is valid and the area has not yet been designated.

### **Background**

5. A Neighbourhood Area must be designated before a Parish Council can prepare a Neighbourhood Plan. There are national regulations guiding how an application for the designation of a Neighbourhood Area should be considered.
6. The regulations state that a local planning authority must designate a Neighbourhood Area if it receives a valid application and some or all of the area has not yet been designated. The regulations also state that a local planning authority must designate the whole of the area applied for in certain circumstances, and this includes if a Parish Council applies for the whole of their parish to be designated as a Neighbourhood Area.
7. A valid application is considered to be one submitted by a 'relevant body', which for SCDC is a Parish Council, that includes:

- a map identifying the area to which the Neighbourhood Area application relates;
- a statement explaining why this area is considered appropriate to be designated as a Neighbourhood Area; and
- a statement that the organisation or body making the application for the designation of the Neighbourhood Area designation is a 'relevant body'.

## **Considerations**

### **Application from Bassingbourn-cum-Kneesworth Parish Council**

8. Bassingbourn-cum-Kneesworth Parish Council has decided that it would like to prepare a Neighbourhood Plan for the whole of its parish. The Parish Council has applied to SCDC for the whole of the parish to be designated as a Neighbourhood Area, supplying a map of the area to be designated, and a statement explaining why the area should be designated (see Appendix A).
9. The Parish Council has undertaken consultation with its community to determine whether to prepare a Neighbourhood Plan, and has also consulted the neighbouring parishes. None of the neighbouring Parish Councils have any objections to Bassingbourn-cum-Kneesworth Parish Council's proposal. Whaddon PC queried whether a joint plan would be appropriate but acknowledged that there are significant differences between the two parishes.

### **Consideration by SCDC**

10. SCDC is supportive of Bassingbourn-cum-Kneesworth Parish Council preparing a Neighbourhood Plan for its parish and is keen for the two Councils to work together in considering the future development of the area.
11. SCDC considers that the application submitted by Bassingbourn-cum-Kneesworth Parish Council is valid and none of the area has been previously designated for neighbourhood planning purposes. As the whole of the parish has been proposed as a Neighbourhood Area, SCDC must designate the Neighbourhood Area.

### **Local Development Scheme**

12. The Local Development Scheme (LDS) sets out the planning policy documents that SCDC intends to prepare for the next three years, and tends to be updated annually. The LDS (agreed in December 2016) includes a section that lists the Neighbourhood Areas designated in South Cambridgeshire and therefore the Neighbourhood Plans that are being prepared. When the LDS is next reviewed, this section of the LDS will be updated to include the Bassingbourn-cum-Kneesworth Neighbourhood Area. In the interim, the complete list of Neighbourhood Areas designated is available to view on the Council's website: [www.scambs.gov.uk/content/neighbourhood-areas](http://www.scambs.gov.uk/content/neighbourhood-areas), and Bassingbourn-cum-Kneesworth Neighbourhood Area will be added to this list.

## **Options**

13. The Planning Portfolio Holder does not have any option but to designate the Neighbourhood Area to be compliant with Neighbourhood Planning legislation, regulations and guidance.

### **Implications**

14. In the writing of this report, taking into account financial, legal, staffing, risk management, equality and diversity, climate change, community safety and any other key issues, the following implications have been considered:

#### ***Financial***

15. SCDC can claim £20,000 per Neighbourhood Plan once it has been successful through the examination and a referendum date has been set.
16. The Parish Council can access funding to assist it in preparing a Neighbourhood Plan. Locality provides grants of up to £9,000 for local communities preparing Neighbourhood Plans.

#### ***Legal***

17. The Planning Portfolio Holder has delegated authority to make decisions on Neighbourhood Area designations.

#### ***Staffing***

18. Support for neighbourhood planning is delivered within existing resources by the Planning Policy Team and the Sustainable Communities and Partnerships Team, drawing upon the expertise of other staff as required.

#### ***Equality and Diversity***

19. Equality and diversity issues will be considered during the preparation of the Neighbourhood Plan as appropriate to its content.

#### ***Climate Change***

20. Climate change issues will be considered during the preparation of the Neighbourhood Plan as appropriate to its content.

### **Consultation responses**

21. None.

### **Effect on Strategic Objectives**

#### **Objective 1 – Living Well: support our communities to remain in good health whilst continuing to protect the natural and built environment**

22. By preparing a Neighbourhood Plan local communities are being given the opportunity to create planning policies that will protect and enhance the character of their local surroundings and contribute to ensuring an outstanding quality of life.

#### **Objective 2 – Homes for Our Future: secure the delivery of a wide range of housing to meet the needs of existing and future communities**

23. Local communities can within a Neighbourhood Plan consider the existing and future needs for housing in their area and positively plan to meet this need through a range of policies and / or allocations in their plan.

**Objective 3 – Connected Communities: work with partners to ensure new transport and digital infrastructure supports and strengthens communities and that our approach to growth sustains prosperity**

24. Neighbourhood planning is an opportunity for the local community to shape their local area, and strengthen their communities by working together.

**Objective 4 – An Innovative and Dynamic Organisation: adopt a more commercial and business-like approach to ensure we can continue to deliver the best possible services at the lowest possible cost**

25. Neighbourhood planning engages local people in the planning process by giving them a tool to guide the future development, regeneration and conservation of an area. SCDC has a duty to support Parish Councils preparing Neighbourhood Plans and is a great opportunity for the Councils to work in partnership and to development new ways of working together.

### **Background Papers**

Planning Practice Guidance relating to the designation of neighbourhood areas:

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/neighbourhood-planning--2#designating-a-neighbourhood-area>

Report to Cabinet on Designating a Neighbourhood Area – Updating the Process (January 2017): <http://scams.moderngov.co.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=293&MId=6797&Ver=4>

### **Appendices**

Appendix A: Application Form and Map to designate the parish of Bassingbourn-cum-Kneesworth as a Neighbourhood Area

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